This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims (deleted text being struck through and added text being underlined):

1. (Original) In a network comprising a plurality of computing devices, each computing device having a memory and being capable of accessing the Internet, and at least one of the computing devices being capable of connecting to the Internet, each computing device capable of connecting to the Internet having a connection priority, a method for assigning an Internet gateway for the network, comprising the steps of:

broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway from one of the computing devices capable of connecting to the Internet, wherein the request to become the gateway includes the connection priority of the computing device broadcasting the request; and

assigning the computing device broadcasting the request as the gateway for the network if the computing device broadcasting the request does not receive a response from the other computing devices within a predetermined time period.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined time period is approximately 1 to 5 seconds.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, further comprising the steps of:

broadcasting to the network the IP address of the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network; and

storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the gateway for the network.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein one of the computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the other computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing the steps of:

transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the Internet.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the other computing devices capable of connecting to the Internet responds to the broadcasted request to become the gateway by performing the steps of:

determining whether the connection priority of the respective computing device is higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request to become the gateway;

if the connection priority of the respective computing device is not higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request, sending no response to the broadcasted request; and

if the connection priority of the respective computing device is higher than the connection priority included in the broadcast request, performing the steps of:

broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway from the respective computing device within the predetermined time period, wherein the request to become the gateway includes the connection priority of the respective computing device; and

assigning the respective computing device as the gateway for the network if the respective computing device receives no response from the other computing devices within the predetermined time period.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the predetermined time period is approximately 1 to 5 seconds.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein each computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, further comprising the step of:

broadcasting to the network the IP address of the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network; and

storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the gateway for the network.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

10. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein one of the computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address and a proxy IP address, further wherein at least one of the other computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing the steps of:

transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy a IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the Internet.

11. (Original) .ı storage medium readable by a computing device and having instructic ns encoded thereon for causing the computing device to perform, ir a network comprising a plurality of computing devices, each compu ing device having a memory and being capable of accessing the Internet, and at least one of the computing devices being capable of connectin ; to the Internet, each computing device capable of connecting to the .nternet having a connection priority, a method for assigning an Inte net gateway for the network, the method comprising the steps of:

broadcasting tc the network a request to become the gateway from one of the com; uting devices capable of connecting to the Internet, wherein the request to become the gateway includes the connection priority (f the computing device broadcasting the request; and

assigning the c)mputing device broadcasting the request as the gateway for the netw ork if the computing device broadcasting the request does not rec ive a response from the other computing devices within a predetermir ed time period.

12. (Original) The storage medium of claim 11, wherein each computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, and further wherein he method further comprises the steps of:

broadcasting t(the network the IP address of the computing device assigned as t] e gateway for the network; and

storing in the ı emory of each computing device the IP address broadcasted to the n twork as the IP address of the gateway for the network.

13. (Original) The storage medium of claim 11, wherein the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

14. (Original) The storage medium of claim 11, wherein one of the computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the other computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing the steps of:

transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

transmitting from the proxy IP address of the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the Internet.

15. (Original) The storage medium of claim 11, wherein at least one of the other computing devices capable of connecting to the Internet responds to the broadcasted request to become the gateway for the network by performing the steps of:

determining whether the connection priority of the respective computing device is higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request to become the gateway;

if the connection priority of the respective computing device is not higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request, sending no response to the broadcasted request; and

if the connection priority of the respective computing device is higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request, performing the steps of:

broadcasting to the network a request to become the

gateway from tl e respective computing device within the predetermined t me period, wherein the request to become the gateway includ s the connection priority of the respective computing devi e; and

assigning the respective computing device as the gateway for the network if the respective computing device receives no response from t e other computing devices within the predetermined time period.

16. (Original) In a network comprising a plurality of computing devices, each compu ing device having a memory and being capable of accessing the Interne t, and at least on of the computing devices being capable of connectin to the Internet, each computing device capable of connecting to the Internet having a connection priority, a method for assigning an Inte net gateway for the network, comprising the steps of:

broadcasting t the network a request for a new gateway from one of the computin devices;

in response to he request for new gateway, broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway from each computing device capable of connectin g to the Internet, wherein each request to become the gateway include the connection priority of the respective computing device br adcasting the request to become the gateway; and

in response to he request to become the gateway, performing by each computing devi e capable of connecting to the Internet steps of:

determini ig whether the connection priority of the respective com uting device is higher than the connection priority includ d in the broadcasted request to become the gateway; if the connection priority of the respective computing device is not h gher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted re uest to become the gateway, sending no response

to the broadcas:ed request to become the gateway; and if the connection prio ity of the respective computing device is higher than the connec ion priority included in the broadcasted request to become the g ateway, performing the steps of:

broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway from the respective computing device within the predeterıined time period, wherein the request to become the gatev ay includes the connection priority of the respectiv e computing device; and

assigning the respective computing device as the new gate way for the network if the respective computing device rc ceives no response from the other computing devices within the predetermined time period.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the predetermined time j eriod is approximately 1 to 5 seconds.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein each computing device is assigned a ınique Internet protocol (IP) address, further comprising the steps of:

broadcasting tc the network the IP address of the computing device assigned as tl e new gateway for the network; and

storing in the ıemory of each computing device the IP address broadcasted to the n twork as the IP address of the gateway for the network.

19. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the computing device assigned as tl e gateway for the network is assigned a unique client IP address anc assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

20. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein one of the computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the other computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing the steps of:

transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the Internet.

21. (Original) A storage medium readable by a computing device and having instructions encoded thereon for causing the computing device to perform, in a network comprising a plurality of computing devices, each computing device having a memory and being capable of accessing the Internet, and at least one of the computing devices being capable of connecting to the Internet, each computing device capable of connecting to the Internet having a connection priority, a method for assigning an Internet gateway for the network, the method comprising the steps of:

broadcasting to the network a request for a new gateway from one of the computing devices;

in response to the request for the new gateway, broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway from each computing device capable of connecting to the Internet, wherein each request to become the gateway includes the connection priority of the respective computing device broadcasting the request to become the gateway; and

in response to the request to become the gateway, performing by each computing device capable of connecting to the Internet the steps of:

determini: g whether the connection priority of the respective comp uting device is higher than the connection priority include l in the broadcasted request to become the gateway;

if the con ıection priority of the respective computing device is not hi gher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted req ıest to become the gateway, sending no response to the broadcas ed request to become the gateway; and

if the con ıection priority of the respective computing device is highe: than the connection priority included in the broadcasted req ıest to become the gateway, performing the steps of:

broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway from the respective computing device within the predeter ıined time period, wherein the request to become the gate' ay includes the connection priority of the respecti' e computing device; and

assigning the respective computing device as the gateway for the network if the respective computing device r' ceives no response from the other computing devices within the predetermined time period.

22. (Original) The storage medium of claim 21, wherein each computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, and further wherein he method further comprises the steps of:

broadcasting t' the network the IP address of the computing device assigned as t.e new gateway for the network; and

storing in the ıemory of each computing device the IP address broadcasted to the n twork as the IP address of the gateway for the network.

23. (Original) The storage medium of claim 21, wherein the computing device as; igned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique client IP ad lress and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

24. (Original) The storage medium of claim 21, wherein one to the computing devic s is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address and a proxy P address, and further wherein at least one of the other computing dev ces is capable of accessing the Internet by performing the steps of:

transmitting fr m the respective computing device to the proxy IP address of the prc xy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

transmitting fr m the proxy IP address of the proxy to the computing device as igned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the Inte rnet.

25. (Withdraw n) In a network comprising a plurality of computing devices, (ach computing device having a memory and being capable of accessing the Internet, and one or more of the computing devices being capab e of connecting to the Internet, and one of the computing devices b ing assigned as a current Internet gateway for the network, a meth d for assigning an Internet gateway for the network, comprising the steps of:

detecting a fai ure to access the Internet through the current Internet gateway by ne of the computing devices;

in response to he detected failure, dynamically assigning one of the computing devic s capable of connecting to the Internet as a new Internet gateway for the network; and

automatically econfiguring each computing device to access the Internet through the new Internet gateway.

26. (Withdraw ı) The method of claim 25, wherein each computing device is ıssigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, and further wherein ıhe step of automatically reconfiguring each computing device to ıccess the Internet through the new Internet gateway further com; rises the steps of:

broadcasting tc the network the IP address of the computing device assigned as tl e new Internet gateway for the network; and

storing in the r emory of each computing device the IP address broadcasted to the n twork as the IP address of the Internet gateway for the network.

27. (Withdraw ı) The method of claim 25, wherein the computing device as ıgned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique client IP ad dress and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

28. (Withdraw ı) The method of claim 25, wherein one of the computing devices i: capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet gateway and is capal le of being assigned a unique client IP address and a proxy IP addre ss, and further wherein at least one of the other computing devices i: capable of accessing the Internet by performing the steps of:

transmitting fr om thc respective computing device to the proxy IP address of the prc xy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

transmitting fr om the proxy IP address of the proxy to the computing device as ıigned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the Int rnet.

29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein the step of dynamically assigning one of the computing devices capable of connecting to the Internet as the new Internet gateway for the network further comprises the steps of:

in response to the detected failure, broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway from one of the computing device capable of connecting to the Internet, wherein the request to become the gateway includes the connection priority of the computing device broadcasting the request; and

assigning the computing device broadcasting the request as the new Internet gateway for the network if the computing device broadcasting the request does not receive a response from the other computing devices within a predetermined time period.

30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29, wherein the predetermined time period is approximately 1 to 5 seconds.

31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29, wherein at least one of the other computing devices capable of connection to the Internet responds to the broadcasted request to become the gateway by performing the steps of:

determining whether the connection priority of the respective computing device is higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request to become the gateway;

if the connection priority of the respective computing device is not higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request to become the gateway, sending no response to the broadcasted request; and

if the connection priority of the respective computing device is higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request to become the gateway, performing the step of:

broadcast ng to the network a request to become the gateway from tl e respective computing device within the predetermined t me period, wherein the request to become the gateway includ s the connection priority of the respective computing devi e; and

assigning the respective computing device as the new Internet gatewa for the network if the respective computing device receives no response from the other computing devices within the pred termined time period.

32. (Withdraw n) The method of claim 31, wherein each computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, and further wherein he step of automatically reconfiguring each computing device to access the Internet through the new Internet gateway further com rises the steps of:

broadcasting tc the network IP address of the computing device assigned as the new nternet gateway for the network; and

storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address broadcasted to the n twork as the IP address of the Internet gateway for the network.

33. (Withdraw n) The method of claim 31, wherein the computing device as igned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique client IP ad dress and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

34. (Withdraw n) The method of claim 31, wherein one of the computing devices i capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet gateway and is capal le of being assigned a unique client IP address and a proxy IP addre ss, and further wherein at least one of the other computing devices i capable of accessing the Internet by performing the steps of:

transmitting from the respective computing device proxy IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the Internet.

35. (Withdrawn) A storage medium readable by a computing device and having instructions encoded thereon for causing the computing device to perform, in a network comprising a plurality of computing devices, each computing device having a memory and being capable of accessing the Internet, and one or more of the computing devices being capable of connecting to the Internet, and one of the computing devices being assigned as a current Internet gateway for the network, a method for assigning an Internet gateway for the network, the method comprising the steps of:

detecting a failure to access the Internet through the current Internet gateway by one of the computing devices;

dynamically assigning one of the computing devices capable of connecting to the Internet as a new Internet gateway for the network; and

automatically reconfiguring each computing device to access the Internet through the new Internet gateway.

36. (Withdrawn) The storage medium of claim 35, wherein each computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, and further wherein the step of automatically reconfiguring each computing device to access the Internet through the new Internet gateway further comprises the steps of:

broadcasting to the IP address of the computing device assigned as the new Internet gateway for the network; and

storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the Internet gateway

for the network.

37. (Withdraw ı) The storage medium of claim 35, wherein the computing device as: igned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique client IP ad lress and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

38. (Withdraw ı) The storage medium of claim 35, wherein one of the computing dev ices is capable of operating as a proxy having a unique sending IP ad lress and a unique receiving IP address, and further wherein at le ıst one of the other computing devices is capable of accessing the Inte net by performing the steps of:

transmitting fr m the respective computing device to the receiving IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

routing from th e sending IP address of the proxy to the computing device as: igned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the Inte rnet.

39. (Withdraw ı) The storage medium of claim 35, wherein the step of dynamically : ssigning one of the computing devices capable of connecting to the Int ernet as the new Internet gateway for the network further comprises th steps of:

broadcasting t the network a request to become the gateway from one of the com uting devices capable of connecting to the Internet, wherein the request to become the gateway includes the connection priority f the computing device broadcasting the request; and

assigning the c mputing device broadcasting the request as the new Internet gatewa for the network if the computing device broadcasting the req ıest does not receive a response from the other computing devices w ithin a predetermined time period.

40. (Withdraw ı) The storage medium of claim 39, wherein at least one of the othe: computing devices capable of connecting to the Internet responds to he broadcasted request to become the gateway by performing the steps of:

determining wh ether the connection priority of the respective computing device is ıigher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted requ ıst to become the gateway;

if the connecti n priority of the respective computing device is not higher than the c)nnection priority included in the broadcasted request to become th : gateway, sending no response to the broadcasted request; and

if the connecti n priority of the respective computing device is higher than the conn ction priority included in the broadcasted request to become th : gateway, performing the steps of:

broadcast ng to network a request to become the gateway from the respec ive computing device within the predetermined time period, wh erein the request to become the gateway includes the connection ıriority of the respective computing device; and

assigning the respective computing device as the new Internet gatewa r for the network if the respective computing device receives no response from the other computing devices within the pred termined time period.

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein broadcasting to the ı etwork the request to become the gateway comprising comprise ı sending the request to more than one computing device.

42. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein broadcasting to the network the request to become the gateway comprises sending the request to more than one computing device without restriction on a number of recipients.

43. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein broadcasting to the network the request to become the gateway comprises sending the request to each computing device of the plurality of computing devices.

44. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein broadcasting to the network the request to become the gateway comprises sending the request to all computing devices of the plurality of computing devices.